

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR, US, PFOR

SUBJECT: P&C COUNSELOR'S CALL ON ACTING HEAD OF MFA/CULTURAL
DIVISION KOROLEV

1. P&C COUNSELOR, ACCOMPANIED BY IO AND ACAO/EXCHANGES, CALLED ON MFA CULTURAL DIVISION ACTING HEAD VALENTIN ALEKSEYEVICH KOROLEV AND US DESK OFFICER IVAN PAVLIVUCH AZAROV NOVEMBER 26. COUNSELOR EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD REQUESTED MEETING TO REVIEW WITH CULTURAL DIVISION REPS A RANGE OF MATTERS COVERED UNDER THE US-USSR CULTURAL AGREEMENT. P&C COUNSEOLOR INDICATED HE WISHED TO INITIATE THE DISCUSSION WITH A "FEW CRITICAL REMARKS."

2. COUNSELOR MENTIONED EMBASSY WAS "DISTURBED" OVER STRING OF RECENT CANCELLATIONS OF SOVIET DELEGATION VISITS TO U.S. VERY SHORTLY BEFORE DELEGATIONS WERE SCHEDULED TO DEPART. THEATRE SEMINAR DELEGATION, KIEV STATE UNIVERSITY IV DELEGATION, AND ACADEMY OF SCIENCES GROUP SCHEDULED TO ATTEND US-. SOVIET CONFERENCE ON ASIAN AFFAIRS AT BERKELEY WERE CITED AS EXAMPLES. COUNSELOR EMPHASIZED BOTH THAT CANCELLATIONS ON SHORT NOTICE CAUSE SEVERE PROGRAM DISRUPTIONS AND UNNECESSARY EXPENSE IN U.S. AND THAT THEY CAUSE SOME AMERICANS TO WONDER ABOUT CURRENT SOVIET INTEREST IN EXCHANGES.

3. COUNSELOR THEN MOVED ON TO DISCUSSION OF CIES VISA NON-ISSUANCE,
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DETAILS OF WHICH WERE CONVEYED IN MOSCOW 18686.

4. ATTACK ON ACTR STUDENT PUKSTA (SEE MOSCOW 18870) AND INCIDENT INVOLVING ENTRY OF SUNY STUDENTS' ROOM (SEE MOSCOW 18623) WERE ALSO CITED, WITH COUNSELOR POINTING OUT THAT EMBASSY WAS SENDING DIPLOMATIC NOTES TO MFA CALLING INCIDENTS TO MINISTRY'S ATTENTION AND REQUESTING FULL REPORTS ON POLICE INVESTIGATIONS OF INCIDENTS TO DATE.

5. KOROLEV AND AZAROV REPLIED THAT THE CANCELLATIONS WERE "REGRETTABLE" AND THAT THEY WOULD BE LOOKED INTO. KORTLEV SAID IT WAS, HOWEVER, HIS VIEW THAT THEATRE SEMINAR TRIP WAS CANCELLED FOR "OBJECTIVE REASONS." MFA REPS INDICATED THEY HAD NOT HEARD PREVIOUSLY OF INCIDENT INVOLVING ACTR, SUNY STUDENTS.

6. COUNSELOR THEN SHIFTED TO AMERICA ILLUSTRATED, RECOUNTING PROCEDURE FOR CHECKING ON SALES OF AI AT MOSCOW KIOSKS AND STATED THAT WE WERE CONCERNED AT NOT SEEING ANY COPIES OF LAST TWO ISSUES ON SALE. AZAROV NOTED PROBLEMS WITH NO. 237, BUT EMBOFFS SAID THEY WERE SPEAKING OF NOS. 238 AND 239. KOROLEV SAID AI VERY POPULAR AND PROBABLY HAD BEEN SOLD OUT. EMBOFFS REPLIED THAT THIS UNDOUBTEDLY TRUE IN SOME CASES, BUT MOST DISTURBING WAS NUMBER OF KIOSK OPERATORS WHO STATED THEY NEVER RECEIVE THE MAGAZINE. COUNSELOR ALSO NOTED THAT IN SPITE OF REPEATED REQUESTS TO SOYUZPECHAT IN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD, WE STILL DO NOT HAVE DISTRIBUTION DATES OR KIOSK LOCATIONS FOR AI SALES IN LENINGRAD.

7. COUNSELOR NEXT RAISED PROBLEM OF UNESCO "COURIER," STATING THAT COPIES RECEIVED FROM MEZHDUNARODNAYA KNIGA THROUGH SUYZPECHAT WERE NOT WHAT EMBASSY HAD ORDERED. EMBASSY WISHED TO INFORM MFA OF OUR UNHAPPINESS WITH CHANGES MADE IN USSR EDITION OF "COURIER," AND REQUESTED MFA ASSISTANCE ON RETURNING THE COPIES SINCE SOYUZPECHAT REFUSED TO ACCEPT THEM. KOROLEV SAID HE WAS UNINFORMED ON THIS MATTER.

8. COUNSELOR SAID THAT WHILE BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT IS DOING VERY WELL, HE MUST RAISE ISSUE OF "BOMB THREAT." THE FACT THAT THE BOMB SQUAD HAD TAKEN FIVE HOURS TO RESPOND TO THE THREAT, LONG AFTER THE BOMB WAS SUPPOSED TO GO OFF, WAS MOST ALARMING. KOROLEV SAID THAT, IN FACT, NO BOMB WAS FOUND AND WASN'T LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXHIBIT DOING WELL?

9. FURTHER ON EXHIBITS, COUNSELOR MENTIONED THAT PHTTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT WILL OPEN IN TBILISI AS THIRD CITY AFTER MUCH NEGOTIATIONS AND NECESSITY TO CUT DOWNSIZE OF SHOW. NOW THAT CULTURAL AGREEMENT IS SIGNED, EMBASSY HAS RAISED SUBJECT OF NEXT THREE CITIES WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. COUNSELOR NOTED THAT SOVIET EXHIBIT ON "SCIENTIFIC SIBERIA" HAD BEEN ALLOWED IN TWO "CLOSED" CITIES.

EMBASSY IS NOT REQUESTING "RECIPROCITY" BUT IF PHOTOGRAPHY USA IS ALLOWED TO SHOW I

A CLOSED SOVIET CITY, THIS WILL HAVE A "FAVORABLE EFFECT." EMBASSY SOME TIME AGO PROPOSED KUYBYSHEV; PITROVANO OF CHAMBER HAS MENTIONED SARATOV; AND GROKIY HAS BEEN MENTIONED. EMBASSY APPRECIATES DIFFICULTIES BUT HOPES MFA WILL BE AS HELPFUL AS DEPT. WAS TO SOVIET EMBASSY. KOROLEV SAID THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT.

10. AS GENERAL SUMMARY COMMENT, MFA OFFICIALS SAID THAT MOS SUBJECTS RAISED WERE NOT WITHIN COMPETENCE OF MFA/CULT, AND EMBASSY SHOULD ADDRESS ITSELF DIRECTLY TO RESPONSIBLE OFFICES AND COME ONTO MFA/CULT ONLY AS LAST RESORT. COUNSELOR REITERATED THAT HE WAS RAISING SUBJECTS WHICH WERE COVERED BY CULTURAL AGREEMENT AND, HE HOPED, IN SAME SPIRIT OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS AND PROBLEMS WHICH HE SAID HE FELT HAD PERVADED RECENT WASHINGTON NEGOTIATIONS ON 1976-79 PROGRAM. THE EMBASSY'S ATTITUDE TO ALL OF THE MATTERS MENTIONED HAD BEEN COMMUNICATED TO THE OFFICES AND MINISTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED. KOROLEV THEN SAID MOST OF THE PROBLEMS RAISED WERE NEW TO HIM AND, THEREFORE, HE HAD NO FURTHER COMMENTS TO MAKE. PROBLEMS DO ARISE AND ARE REGRETTABLE, HE SAID, AND SUCH MEETINGS ARE USEFUL AND WELCOME.

11. COMMENT: EMBASSY UNCERTAIN FROM TONE AND TREND OF MEETING WHETHER PRESENTING ITS LIST OF GRIEVANCES TO MFA/CULT WILL BRING ANY IMMEDIATE SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS BROUGHT TO THEIR ATTENTION.

KOROLEV'S TTIC NON-RESPONSE TO EACH SUBJECT EVEN HAD THE NORMALLY CALM AZAROV FLUBBING HIS TRANSLATIONS. KOROLEV ALSO TWICE MENTIONED IN A POORLY DISGUISED EFFORT AT HUMOR THE HOPE THAT EMBASSY VISITORS WOULD BALANCE THEIR "CRITICAL REMARKS" WITH THE APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF SELF-CRITICISM. WE EXPECT TO HEAR LITTLE OR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOTHING FURTHER ON MOST OF THE ABOVE POINTS FROM MFA/CULT. BUT, AS MFA CLEARLY DOES NOT ENJOY SUCH RECITATIONS OF CRITICAL COMMENTS, EMBASSY IS HOPEFUL MFA/CULT WILL ENCOURAGE GREATER RESPONSIVENESS TO EMBASSY'S INITIATIVE FROM THE VARIOUS BUREAUCRACIES RESPONSIBLE FOR COOPERATING WITH THE USG IN FULFILLING THE CULTURAL AGREEMENT.
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